

"Piece By Piece -- Perea!"

Text: John 10:41, "And Many resorted unto Him, and said, 'John did no miracle; but all things that John spoke of this man were true.'"

Scripture: John 10:22-42

I am sure that most of us can remember a game which we played when we were children, in which someone was in charge of giving directions to the others who were playing. Each player in the game would ask the leader if he or she could take a step. And then the orders were given, "Take one giant step forward," or "take one giant step backward." Well, this is what we are going to do this morning. We are going to take one giant step backward. All along each Sunday and each Wednesday, we have moved forward to a new town or location, and we have looked at the appropriate piece of our Lenten Puzzle and seen how it was involved in the life of Jesus. This morning we are going to take a backward look at ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ two other places and the significance they played in Jesus' latter days. We are looking at these two places as recorded in the Gospel of John, simply because the other Gospels do not give this particular information.

You will recall that according to our sermon last Sunday, Jesus had arrived in Jerusalem and was prepared to take action against those who were desecrating the Temple with their commercialism.

Our Scripture for today begins with the information that Jesus was at Jerusalem, at the Feast of Dedication and it was winter. (Vs 22). Now what all of this means is that Jesus had come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication which was held in December of each year, and it commemorated the cleansing of the Temple by Judas Machabeus. It is also ~~the~~ called Hanukkah and is observed during the same time that Christians today observe as Advent.

It was the custom of Rabbis to stroll through the Temple with their ~~fx~~ students walking with them while the Rabbi taught them. Thus we find that Jesus is walking in the Temple area called Solomons porch which was a court with huge pillars, ~~and it was roofed over~~ and was covered over. Now the time element here is that Jesus is in Jerusalem prior to the spring Passover, and therefore, prior to His entry into Jerusalem where He was hailed as the Messiah.

But the real significance of all of this is that Jesus is being investigated by the Jews. They come to Him and ask Him point blank if He is the Christ. If He is the promised one of God. The answer that Jesus gives is that He has told them and they were unwilling to believe what He said. ^{Vs 26.} So He tells them that they would not believe because they were not of His flock. HE means that they are not willing to accept Him as their Saviour and so they do not know Him as they should. Vs 27 He explains what He is talking about, and when He states that He is equal with God, they want to stone Him. Perhaps they came to this Court of the Temple with stones in their hands, prepared to kill this imposter once and for all.

When Jesus questions them why they would stone Him, He is asking for which of the good works did they want to kill Him. He had healed people, He had raised others from the dead. All of His deeds were good and were of no monetary value to Him. And so, why were they upset with these deeds? He is asking. The only answer they can give is that they will stone Him for blasphemy. But Jesus is equal to the occasion as usual because He points out a portion of Scripture that to the Jews was understandable, but to ~~any~~ anyone else it is not understood.

Jesus was referring to the 82nd Psalm vs 6, which read, "I have said, Ye are ^{Psalm} Gods," and all of you are children of the most High." This was a warning against unjust judges in Israel. A judge was commissioned by God to bring justice and God's help to men. He was in a sense God to men. In some of the Jewish regulations we can see this more clearly. ^{21:6} In Exodus for instance we read that a Jewish servant may be set free in the 7th year of his work. The verse tells us, "Then his master shall bring him to the judges. The Hebrew word here for "judges" is Elohim, which is the plural for God, thus, meaning ^{in scripture} gods. This is also found in Exodus 22:8 & 9. So if ~~scripture says~~ some who are specially commissioned by God, can be referred to as gods, why could not Jesus refer to Himself as a God is what He is saying to these people? Now in this we can see that Jesus was laying claim to being commissioned especially by God for this purpose. The Greek word for consecrate is

"Hagiazein," which has its root in the word Hagios which means holy. A thing that is holy is set apart. It is something that is apart from the common. It is sanctified, it is set aside for a special task. Jesus was saying as the Old Testament so often pointed out, that things like the altar were to be set apart. People like Jeremiah, and Ezekiel were to be set apart. Servants such as the priests and helpers were to be set apart. Jesus was identifying with these people and things to show that He was different from anyone they had ever met or come in contact with.

After He had said these things they tried to seize Him once more, but He was able to elude them and we read that He went away again into the area beyond the Jordan where John Baptized. Now this area was Perea, a district just outside of Judea. It was at ~~Bethany~~ a place called Bethany beyond Jordan where John Baptized and where Jesus now returned. This Bethany is not to be confused with the Bethany just outside of Jerusalem.

Here we read that, "Many resorted unto Him, and said, John did no miracle; but all things that John spoke of this man were true." The people had heard the predictions John had made concerning Jesus, and now they were able to make the complete comparison because Jesus had completed a good portion of His ministry in ~~this area~~ this area and nearby vicinity.

The people were able to realize that what had been said of Jesus was true. They could recognise this because He possessed the necessary credentials that set Him apart from all of the other preachers and teachers and prophets of His day. He accomplished this in two very distinct and important ways. First He accomplished this by schooling Himself in the Word of God. Jesus was an authority on the Word of God. How did He get that way? Was it merely because He was the Son of God and He came by it naturally? No, He got it by reading the scriptures. ~~By~~ By poring over it, and knowing what God had to say, and how God moved in the lives of Moses, and Abraham and all of the others. It came by a constant searching and seeking.

(Illustration of man bequeathed a Bible by wealthy uncle.)

Here was a man who through his own ignorance withheld his own rightful wealth

from himself because he was disappointed with his legacy. This is a good illustration of many people. In today's modern world we are confronted by all of the complex ills of society. People are frustrated, angry, despairing, filled with tension and anxiety. Many of them frequently ask, "What is the answer? Where do I go from here? What shall I do?" The answers to the problems not only of our present day world, but for all of mankind is to be found within the pages of this book. Pick a subject, any subject and God has an answer for it in His Word. Not only does He have an answer for it, but that answer has been prepared for you and me thousands of years ago. That is more than we can say about any of the leading so called authorities such as Freud and Jung and all the rest. This is ~~the book~~ what Jesus turned to, ~~and what made Him to be~~ this is where He schooled Himself. This is why He was able to show that "all things John spoke of Him were true."

~~Jesus also showed that He was set apart by His unique prayer~~

(Illustration of elderly preacher and callused knees)

The one thing that I learned this past week that is absolutely essential to a renewal in a person or in a church, is a constant, steady prayer life. This is the second essential that set Jesus apart from the ordinary. He prayed often, and He prayed fervently. Yet, how many people today do not and cannot pray. We wouldn't think of skipping two or three meals a day. Yet this is what we do with prayer. It is pushed aside and never done because of ignorance or unconcern. Too often, prayer is simply a crutch to be brought out in times of trouble or distress. When in ~~actual~~ actuality it should be indulged in the same as we regularly eat a meal. We cannot come to church just once a year and expect to get to know God as we should. We cannot just pray once a year and be able to talk to God as we should. We cannot just pick up the Bible once a year and know what God's plan is for us and our families. We need to worship regularly, pray regularly, and read God's Word regularly.

We need to indulge in the things of God, not just to form a habit. But to know Him, Christ Jesus, and the power of His resurrection. Only in this way

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA

PALM SUNDAY MARCH 23, 1975

REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. EUGENE STEPHENSON, ORGANIST
MR. RALPH COOPER, CHOIR DIRECTOR
PATTY BASEHORE, JEFF CAMPBELL - ACOLYTES

ORDER OF WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.

PRELUDE MUSIC: "HOSANNA, HOSANNA"-ELIOT; "JESUS WEPT"-
GODFREY; "THE HOLY CITY" - ADAMS

SILENT PRAYER

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 176 "CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS"
*ASCRIPTION - CHORAL AMEN

*EXHORTATION

*CONFESSION (IN UNISON) "GRACIOUS GOD, FATHER OF OUR LORD
JESUS CHRIST, YOU HAVE PROMISED TO RECEIVE US WHEN WE
COME TO YOU. WE CONFESS THAT WE HAVE SINNED AGAINST YOU
IN THOUGHT, WORD AND DEED. WE HAVE DISOBEYED YOUR LAW.
WE HAVE NOT LOVED YOU OR OUR NEIGHBORS AS WE SHOULD.
FORGIVE US, O GOD, AND GRANT THAT WE MAY LIVE AND SERVE
YOU IN NEWNESS OF LIFE; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN."

*KYRIE (CHOIR, CONGREGATION AND PASTOR)

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON - CHORAL AMEN

*PRAISE

*PASTOR: 'O LORD OPEN OUR LIPS.

*PEOPLE: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH THY PRAISE

*DOXOLOGY No. 551

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 10:22-42

HYMN No. 138 "WHEN, HIS SALVATION BRINGING"

*AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH (APOSTLES' CREED)

*GLORIA PATRI

*CALL TO PRAYER

*PASTOR: THE LORD BE WITH YOU.

*PEOPLE: AND WITH THY SPIRIT.

*PASTOR: LET US PRAY.

*PRAYER AND PRAYER RESPONSE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY: "THE PALMS"

FAURE

THE RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

ANNOUNCEMENT: "HOSANNA! - HOSANNA!"

WILSON

PRAYER: "PIECE BY PIECE - PEREA!"

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 133 "RIDE ON! RIDE ON!"

*BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN

POSTLUDE: "ALL GLORY, LAUD AND HONOR" PEERY

----- *CONGREGATION STANDING -----

THE LOVELY FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR HAVE BEEN PLACED BY
DONN E. MILLER IN LOVING MEMORY OF HIS "MOTHER" -
DOROTHY KALO MILLER.

THE PALMS ON THE ALTAR HAVE BEEN PLACED BY THE ALVIN
TAYLOR FAMILY IN LOVING MEMORY OF MR. & MRS. JOHN J.
SWEENEY. YOU ARE WELCOME TO THEM AFTER THE SERVICE,
THE USHERS WILL PASS THEM OUT.

ELDER AND MRS. ROBERT BASEHORE WILL GREET THE PEOPLE.
NURSERY WILL BE PROVIDED TODAY BY: MRS. DRUSILLA
RENSEL, MRS. VICKIE HOLT AND ELLEN MASTER.

THE ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY WAS 219.

WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING PERSONS INTO OUR CHURCH
FELLOWSHIP TODAY:

PROFESSION OF FAITH: MR. & MRS. ARTHUR CARNEY
MRS. AVIDA MILLER
MISS VICKIE WINRADER
LETTER OF TRANSFER: MR. & MRS. HERNERT SHEARER
MISS SUE ELLEN SHEARER
MR. & MRS. RONALD VENSEL

TODAY - AFTER THE SERVICE - THE SENIOR YOUTH GROUP
IS SPONSORING AN EASTER EGG HUNT. THIS IS FOR NURSERY
AND THE SECOND GRADE. IT WILL BE HELD IN THE UNDERCROFT

TODAY - 4:00 P.M. - SACRED CONCERT BY BUTLER SYMPHONY
CHOIR FEATURING THE CREATION BY HAYDN - FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH. SLIDES WILL ACCOMPANY THE MUSIC.

A SOCIAL HOUR WILL FOLLOW.

WED. - 7:30 - PREPARATORY SERVICE "EPHRAIM" - AFTER

SERVICE - SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING - IMPORTANT.

THURS. - 7:30 - HOLY COMMUNION - "CENACULUM" - FOLLOW-
ING THE SERVICE - FELLOWSHIP HOUR FOR NEW MEMBERS AND
THE CONGREGATION IN THE UNDERCROFT.

GOOD FRIDAY - 6:00 - YMCA BREAKFAST FOR MEN - J. W.

HARMON AND KEN WEITZEL HAVE TICKETS; - 7:30 -YMCA

BREAKFAST FOR WOMEN - RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE AHEAD.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE - 7:30 P.M. - "GOLGOTHA" - HOLY COM

EASTER SUNDAY - NO COMMUNION - "SORROW, JOY AND HEARTURN

FRI. - APR. 4 - 6:30 P.M. - WORK NIGHT AT THE CHURCH.

TRAIL
MRS. NICHOLAS, MRS. KATHY BANCROFT, HOSPITAL

"Piece B Piece -- Perea!"

Text: John 10:41, "And many resorted ~~to~~ Him unto Him,
as said, John did no miracles; but all things that
John spoke of this man were true."

Scripture: John 10:22-42

Childrens game, 1 giant step backward & Wed also
last Sun Js Jeru at Temp, 2day winter B4 trium entry
(READ & EXEGETE SCRIPTURE)

Peop recog Js as hav credents & set apart

2 reasons: FIRST: Word of God

Come naturally Bcause S of G?

NO. He liv it/read it/fulfill it

He writing NT & living OT

it constant serch & seek 4 Him

(ILLUSTRATION MAN & UNCLES BIBLE)

thru ignor miss wealth money & Js

many peop this way

complex world ask, what do, where turn, where go?

Answers this book

pick subj, any subj, it answer M's yrs ago,

no like Freud, Jung etc

Js turn 2 Word, study it, & thus TEXT

(ILLUSTRATION PREACHER & CALLUSED KNEES)

lern this wk essent renew peop, church-prayer

THIS SECOND: set Js apart

Many peop do not/cannot pray

Meals no skip/skip pray

2 oft pray use as crutch

1 B indulg same meals

cannot cum 2 ch 1nce yr expect get know G

" pray " " B able talk G as shud

" read Bibs " " " know G'S plan us & fam

Need worship reg, pray reg, read G Word reg.

" indulge things G, not just 2 form habit,

But 2 know Him & the power of His resurr.

Only this way can lern, know 1st hand (TEXT b)

Only acclaim with Hosannaa if truly know Him personal

2 accl & no know, empty, hollow, no meaning

But 2 know Him is love Him, 2 luv Him is serv Him

2 serv Him is accl Kg of Kgs

Need sort out ea lives just where stand rela W of G

r a pr, & rela Js Xp, can we all hones/sincer decl

"O chat with yonder sacred throng, we at His feet may

fall, We'll join the everlasting song, & crown Him

Lord of all. May G grant that ea can serch own liv

& harts & mak commitment anew this day.

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.